



# Quarterly Report

---

Oklahoma County Criminal Justice  
Advisory Council  
Quarterly Report to Interlocal Partners

# Table Of Content

**ABOUT US 03**

---

**OUR SIX-FOLD PLAN 04**

---

**EVIDENCE-BASED PRETRIAL DECISIONS 05**

---

**ALTERNATIVES FOR MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTION 07**

---

**END FINES-BASED INCARCERATION 11**

---

**JAIL POPULATION AND TRENDS 13**

---





## MEMBERS

**Vicki Behenna**, Chairperson, (District Attorney of Oklahoma County)

**Brigitte Biffle**, Vice-Chairperson, (Chief Public Defender of Oklahoma County)

**Sue Ann Arnall**, Second Community Representative

**Ron Bacy**, Chief of Police of Oklahoma City

**Sanford Coats**, Greater Oklahoma City Chamber Representative

**Craig Freeman**, City Manager of Oklahoma City

**Christy Gillenwater**, President & CEO of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber

**Mankinta Holloway**, Court Administrator of Oklahoma City

**Judge Donald Kiffin**, Presiding Judge of Oklahoma City Municipal Court

**Sheriff Tommie Johnson III**, Oklahoma County

**Rev. Theodis Manning**, Fourth Community Representative

**Brian Maughan**, Oklahoma County Commissioner

**Judge Richard Ogden**, Presiding Judge of Oklahoma County District Court

**Tony Tyler**, First Community Representative

**Retired Rear Admiral Gregory Slavonic**, Interim Commissioner of the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

**Dan Straughan**, Third Community Representative

**Rick Warren**, Court Clerk of Oklahoma County

**Police Chief JD Younger**, City of Edmond Designee

**Melissa Walton**, Executive Director

**Amy K. Simpson**, City Clerk for OKC, Secretary

**Cole Marshall**, General Counsel McAfee & Taft



# ABOUT US

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to independently assess our community's criminal justice system by analyzing the processes that lead to jail population, understanding how the decisions in the process are made, identifying the costs associated with processes and decisions, recommending priorities to responsibly reduce jail population with associated costs, and outlining long-term sustainability options.

## OUR VISION

- An economical, efficient, and smart local justice system that reflects our values of fairness, compassion and good governance.
- A system of pre-trial detention that effectively prioritizes public safety through data-informed and evidence-based practices.
- Detention facilities that are safe and humane for both staff and detainees.
- Community oversight that is sustainable and continually strives for efficiency.



---

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I am continuously impressed with the leaders sitting around the table at our Criminal Justice Advisory Council meetings. It is exciting work to sit among all the officials who make the whole system function, as they collaborate to choose the next right step in meaningful reforms.

In this first quarter of fiscal year 2026 our members relaunched all CJAC subcommittees into active service, after a hiatus during our leadership transition. Our Courts, Facilities, and Data Subcommittees are where we take deep dives into the data and forge solutions that will help create a safer, more just community. Among the top priorities of these committees is helping to guide the development of new mental health treatment facilities and working with partner agencies on a traceability program to share data throughout the whole justice system.

CJAC's committees are full of talented leaders with a passion for reforms that offer everyone a fair chance to succeed as they navigate the justice system.





## OUR SIX-FOLD PLAN.

In 2015, the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber created a justice reform task force with support from the Vera Institute of Justice, which identified six key areas for improvement now guiding CJAC's work. While some reforms are limited by state law, most can be implemented locally through collaboration across law enforcement, the jail, and the courts. These efforts aim to create a justice system that is safer, fairer, and more efficient, with meaningful progress already underway in Oklahoma County.

1

### Justice System Transparency

The Criminal Justice Advisory Council fulfills this role by fostering coordination. It unites leaders from the justice system, the business sector, and nonprofits to drive lasting reform. The council uses data to design and implement countywide justice solutions.

2

### Preventing Jail for Low-Level Offenses

Low-level arrests make up a quarter of jail bookings, slowing operations with little impact on safety. Keeping these individuals out of jail saves time and resources.

3

### Evidence-Based Pretrial Decisions

Most people in county jail are pretrial, held only for an inability to pay bail. Risk-based strategies would improve fairness and reduce unnecessary detention.

4

### Court Process Efficiency

Delays keep people jailed for months without improving safety. CJAC works with judges and attorneys to move cases efficiently from arrest to resolution.

5

### Alternatives for Mental Health & Addiction

People who suffer from mental health or substance use disorders are overrepresented in jail. CJAC advocates for community partnerships to provide holistic solutions such as treatment, housing, and jobs instead of incarceration.

6

### End Fines-Based Incarceration

Excessive fines trap people in a cycle of debt and jail, eventually costing taxpayers more. Smarter, compassionate approaches can resolve cases without punishing poverty.



# Evidence-Based Pretrial Decisions

Most people in county jail are pretrial, held only for an inability to pay bail. Risk-based strategies would improve fairness and reduce unnecessary detention.



## TEEM Public Safety Assessment Implementation

Among the most core responsibilities CJAC was tasked with upon its formation was to reduce pretrial detention of folks charged but not yet convicted of a crime, using evidence based strategies. The Vera Report recommended a pretrial risk assessment to guide judges' release decisions and ensure equal treatment of all defendants. This piece of the mission is about fairness, as we know, upwards of 80% of those held pre-trial are simply unable to pay bail. This tool provides a safeguard in preventing folks from staying detained under such conditions.

Research into the key data that indicates a person's likelihood to attend court and avoid reoffending is poised to move Oklahoma County forward. Our partner agency, TEEM, has led the effort to bring the Public Safety Assessment (PSA) to Oklahoma County courts. The PSA is an actuarial assessment that helps rank a defendant's risk level, prioritizing potential risk to the public, while using pretrial detention as sparingly as possible for low risk individuals. The PSA is now in the early stages of implementation.



**750,000**  
Cases



**300**  
Jurisdictions

Data from 750,000 cases, out of about 300 jurisdictions around the nation (to date, the largest set of pretrial data ever collected for a study) resulted in a list of those most crucial pretrial release factors. Ultimately, 11 factors helped create a questionnaire highly targeted at success and public safety, and defendants answers are organized into a matrix that helps recommend release conditions for judicial officers. Researchers then used the PSA to assess and review 500,000

additional cases in diverse jurisdictions to test its effectiveness in predicting both court attendance and risk to the public. The PSA, in combination with other pretrial improvements, boosts rates of pretrial release and reduces use of financial conditions of release, without negatively impacting crime or court appearance rates.

### PSA Factors:

- Age at current arrest
- Current violent offense
  - » Current violent offense and 20 years old or younger
- Pending charge at the time of the arrest
- Prior misdemeanor conviction
- Prior felony conviction
  - » Prior conviction
- Prior violent conviction
- Prior failure to appear pretrial in the past two years
- Prior failure to appear pretrial older than two years
- Prior sentence to incarceration

This assessment comes to Oklahoma County well tested and is currently in use in county courts. Judges can confidently rely on this new tool to understand risk, and expedite folks' release. TEEM staff and justice partners, including the Oklahoma County District Attorney's Office and the Oklahoma County Public Defender's Office, trained on its use and began applying it to eligible detainees, promoting fairer pretrial release and reducing reliance on bail without increasing crime.



# Alternatives for Mental Health & Addiction

People who suffer from mental health or substance use disorders are overrepresented in jail. CJAC advocates for community partnerships to provide holistic solutions such as treatment, housing, and jobs instead of incarceration.



# Building a Continuum of Care in Oklahoma County

**Expanding mental health and substance use treatment to prevent incarceration and strengthen community well-being.**

Oklahoma County provides tiered responses to those experiencing mental health and substance use struggles or crises, based on the level of crisis and level of justice system involvement. It is clear that the limited capacity of those current care providers is not enough to meet the needs of our county, but thanks to an influx of funding and support, several new facilities are coming. CJAC is proud to serve as an advisory body in the development of some of these new treatment centers, through our Facilities Subcommittee, chaired by Sue Ann Arnall and Dan Straughan.

**Currently, our mental health care system offers six levels of intervention.**

## **Intercept 0:**

Emphasis on prevention, where services can avoid crisis or law enforcement involvement

### **Examples:**

988, homelessness outreach and shelters, Domestic Violence safeline, substance use treatment services, behavioral health services

## **Intercept 3:**

Support services to navigate justice system after a criminal charge

### **Examples:**

Treatment Courts, Diversion Hub

## **Intercept 1:**

Emergencies or interventions through law enforcement or first responders

### **Examples:**

Public Inebriate Alternative, mobile crisis services, and 911 and law enforcement, Mobile Integrated HealthCare

## **Intercept 4:**

Reentry services aimed at sending justice-involved people back into the community without reoffending

### **Examples:**

Diversion Hub, Pardon and parole board

## **Intercept 2:**

Social services involved after initial arrest or detention

### **Examples:**

TEEM Pre-Trial Services

## **Intercept 5:**

Parole and probation services at the final stage of justice system involvement

### **Examples:**

Probation services, community sentencing, parole

CJAC is mapping out the network of support through strategic planning for who may receive care in these facilities and under what conditions. Each new mental health and substance abuse care center will be designed to prevent jail bookings when treatment can serve as a better option. The long term goal is that treatment services exist for people at every level- prevention, crisis, and all throughout a person's time in the justice system- to prevent incarceration for those who need mental health or addiction intervention. Two crucial additions are the Behavioral Care Center and The Crisis Center.

The Behavioral Care Center, coming at the end of 2026, will provide diversion and stabilization services linked to the county jail. The center will be designed for those who have been arrested but would be better served with treatment, as a final point of intervention before those with mental health or addiction struggles enter the justice system. An agreement to complete the program comes with an exchange for the dismissal of charges and expungement of arrest.

The Crisis Center, led by Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS), will expand assessment, detox, and crisis stabilization services. Targeting indigent and Medicaid populations, this facility will divert individuals from jail.

CJAC's involvement will keep the focus on preventative services and driving down incarceration among folks who are struggling with their mental health. Overall, access to mental healthcare makes entire communities healthier, happier and safer. The expected impact of these planned facilities is to help keep families together and stable, shrink our prison and jail populations, and offer meaningful support to residents in need.











# End Fines-Based Incarceration

Excessive fines trap people in a cycle of debt and jail, eventually costing taxpayers more. Smarter, compassionate approaches can resolve cases without punishing poverty.



# Ability to Pay Policies

**Reducing the burden of fines and fees through fair, evidence-based assessments and alternatives.**

At the end of the summer 2025, Oklahoma County stakeholders presented an approach for implementing ability-to-pay solutions, a key step toward building a smarter and more effective justice system.

The presentation came after Oklahoma County stakeholders participated in a virtual learning sprint designed to inform local jurisdictions about the ability-to-pay assessments and how to implement them, manage payment plans or offer alternatives to fines and fees. Officials from City of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County Judges, Oklahoma County District Attorney's Office, Oklahoma County Public Defender's Office, Arnall Family Foundation, Diversion Hub, Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma, and CJAC all participated and continue to use what they learned to seek solutions to reduce the impact of fines and fees as a driver of jail growth.

Ability-to-pay assessments evaluate a person's financial situation to determine what, if anything, they can afford without creating hardship in their lives. Payment plans allow reduced fines to be paid over time without penalties, and community service can substitute for financial penalties altogether, through CJAC partners like SHINE, Oklahoma County's diversion and community service provider.

Across the U.S., fines and fees often burden people disproportionately, especially those with limited means. Ability-to-pay assessments, payment plans, and community service alternatives can make the system more equitable.

Used together, these policies ensure fairness, align with constitutional standards, and improve court efficiency by reducing administrative costs and unnecessary detention for unpaid debt.

Promoting equity in our system through more thoughtful fines and fees management is a process, and our partners across the justice system continue to work on solutions that meet both an individual's and a community's needs for public safety and accountability.

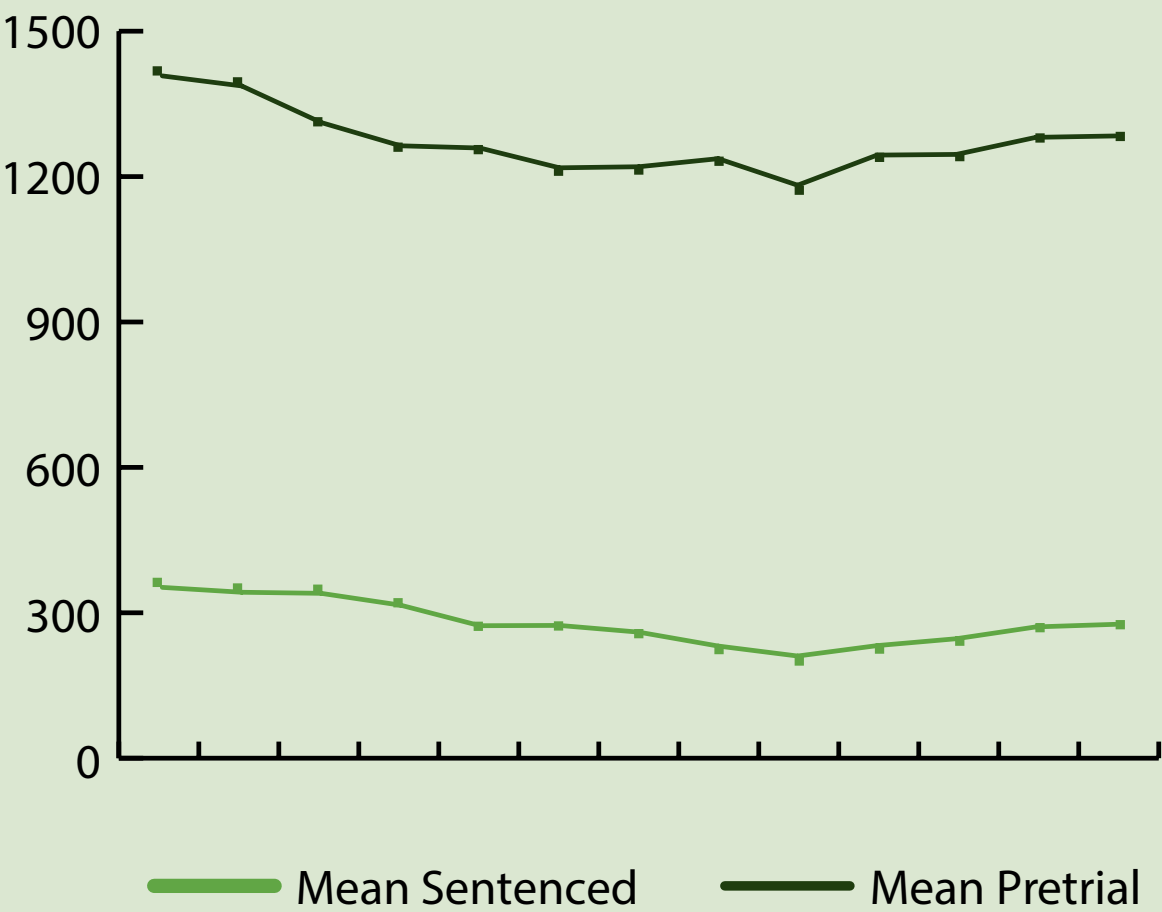


# Jail Population and Trends

## Fluctuating jail populations mark early fiscal year trends in Oklahoma County.

The first quarter of fiscal year 2026 shows a fluctuating but overall rising population at the Oklahoma County jail. In August and September 2025, the jail population reached 1,779 and 1,745—marking the highest numbers since October 2021. This quarter also saw the highest number of sentenced individuals for the year, averaging between 350 and 364. The annual average for 2025 remains the highest since 2022. The Criminal CJAC’s Courts Subcommittee is using this data to study the factors driving increases among both sentenced and pretrial populations and to develop strategies aimed at safely reducing the jail population.

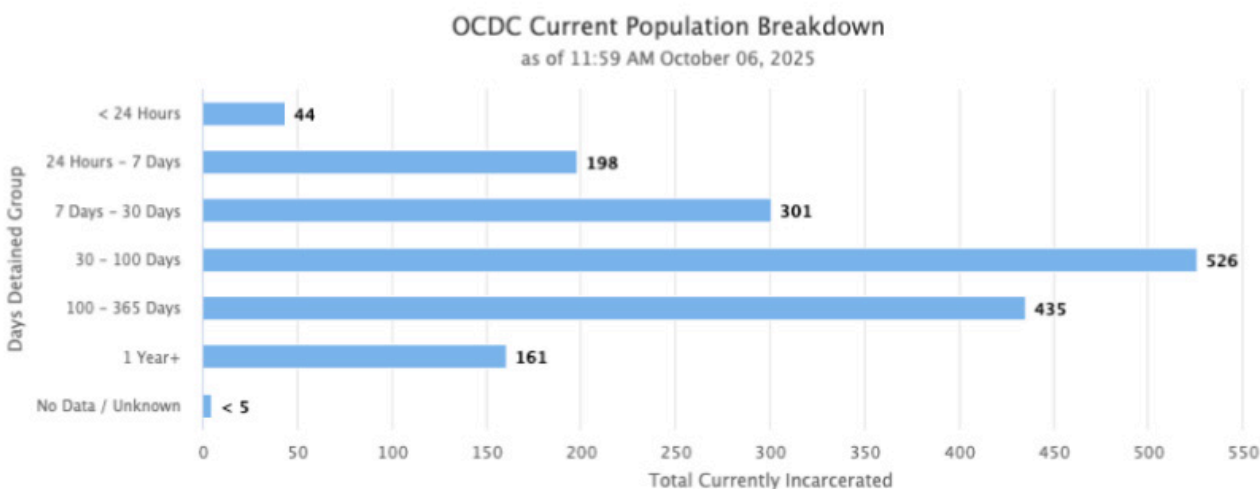
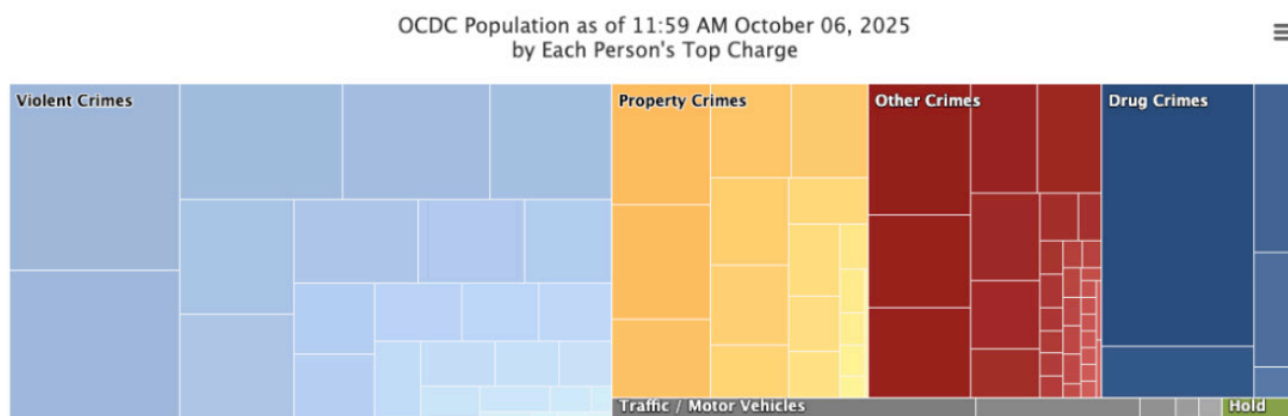
## Pretrial Snapshot Summary September 2024 - September 2025





## Enhanced public dashboard offers deeper insight into jail data and population trends.

This quarter, CJAC launched an updated version of the interactive Detention Center Dashboard, thanks to the support of Oklahoma Policy Institute. When originally launched in 2021, it was the first major effort to compile and share data out of the jail to drive improvements. The new dashboard offers a much more detailed look, not only into the population and demographics, but also charges, security levels, length of stay and more. The new dashboard was designed with input from the public, in particular from those working in service nonprofits, reform work or policy creation, to help us build a more useful dashboard. Access the dashboard on [OKCountyCJAC.com](http://OKCountyCJAC.com).



### DETENTION CENTER INTERACTIVE DASHBOARD

[www.okcountycjac.com/oklahoma-county-detention-center-population-dashboard](http://www.okcountycjac.com/oklahoma-county-detention-center-population-dashboard)



OKLAHOMA COUNTY  
**CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE**  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Our Address**

123 Park Ave., 1st Floor,  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102

**Web & Email**

Email : [mwalton@okcountycjac.org](mailto:mwalton@okcountycjac.org)  
Web : [www.okcountycjac.com](http://www.okcountycjac.com)



@OKCountyCJAC



Oklahoma County Criminal  
Justice Advisory Council